

EXHIBIT B

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI
NORTHERN DIVISION

JOHN BARNHARDT PLAINTIFF

v. CIVIL ACTION NO: 4:65cv1300

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
INTERVENOR PLAINTIFF

MERIDIAN MUNICIPAL SEPARATE
SCHOOL DISTRICT DEFENDANT

TRANSCRIPT OF MOTION TO MODIFY DESEGREGATION PLAN AND FOR
EXPEDITED CONSIDERATION

THURSDAY, AUGUST 11, 2022

BEFORE THE HONORABLE HENRY T. WINGATE
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

COURT REPORTER:

Fred W. Jeske, RMR, CRR
701 North Main Street, Suite 228
Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39401
(601) 255-6432
fred_jeske@mssd.uscourts.gov

1 APPEARANCES:

2 REPRESENTING THE PLAINTIFF BARNHARDT and PRIVATE
3 PLAINTIFFS:

4 JOHN SPENCER CUSICK, ESQUIRE
5 NATASHA MERLE, ESQUIRE
6 NAACP Legal Defense &
7 Educational Fund, Inc. - New York
8 40 Rector Street, 5th Floor
9 New York, NY 10006-1738
10 212-965-2200
11 jcusick@naacpldf.org
12 nmerle@naacpldf.org
13

14 REPRESENTING INTERVENOR PLAINTIFF:

15 ARIA VAUGHAN, ESQUIRE
16 U. S. Department of Justice-CRT
17 950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
18 4CON, 10th Floor
19 Washington, DC 20530
20 202-598-9629
21 aria.vaughan@usdoj.gov
22

23 NATANE SINGLETON, ESQUIRE
24 U. S. Department of Justice
25 950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20530
202-307-6880
natane.singleton@usdoj.gov

1 APPEARANCES CONTINUED:

2 REPRESENTING THE DEFENDANT:

3 JOHN G. COMPTON, ESQUIRE
4 Witherspoon & Compton, LLC
5 P. O. Box 845 (39202)
6 1100 23rd Avenue
7 Meridian, MS 39301
8 601-693-6466
9 jcompton@witherspooncompton.com

7 LINDSEY O. WATSON, ESQUIRE
8 Adams and Reese, LLP - Ridgeland
9 1018 Highland Colony Parkway
10 Suite 800
11 Ridgeland, MS 39157
12 601-292-0739
13 lindsey@wilbanksdowd.com

12 -oOo-

1 state the district has had particular difficulty with teacher
2 recruitment at Carver Middle School. Do you see that?

3 A. Yes, sir, I do.

4 Q. And so my question is why has there been a particular
5 difficulty with teacher recruitment at Carver Middle School?

6 A. Well, I would say as with any school that struggles with
7 performance, sometimes it's challenging for an educator
8 committing and staying there. Sometimes the engagement or the
9 environment from families is not as active as it may be in some
10 schools. For us at Carver Middle School sometimes the
11 perception or the reputation may not always be as positive at
12 one middle school over the other. And I'm saying these are
13 perceptions simply because I believe my children at Carver are
14 just as intelligent and amazing as the kids at the other two
15 middle schools, but sometimes you tend to fight perception.

16 I need to be blunt and say the perception of hiring
17 teachers to work in Meridian Public School District because of
18 a consent order tends to get in the way when we go to
19 recruitment fairs. Sometimes there are discussions where
20 people will say You don't want to go to Meridian, they've got
21 that federal thing over there. And we've had to counter that
22 and educate people regarding what that is and how it doesn't
23 hinder what we're trying to do to educate children.

24 Q. So I heard you say three factors for the reason why it's
25 particularly difficult, performance, engagement and